A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Tuesday, March 15. 1709.

IN speaking of our general Naturalization, I find our Peoples Eyes something open, and the popular Mists that formerly clouded their Understandings, something clear'd up; The Famous *BRISTOL* Members Arguments, *Chimæras I should call them*, of bringing Strangers in upon us, and giving away our Liberties that our Ancestors fought for to Foreigners—Have had some time to moulder away into the first Dirt they rose from, I mean, *our National Pride*; for this Reason I have said no more to press forward a Law, that I see going on without Opposition.

But as we have a Temper in *England* to shew our Discontents and Dislike of Laws, after they are made as well as before, it may be as useful to assist in reconciling our People to this Law when pass'd, as it was to cheque their design'd Opposition of it while passing.——

And first a Word to those honest Church-Men, that would have the Law extend to none but those that would take the Sacrament of the Church of *England*—And why the Sacrament be a Test of Naturalization, Gentlemen? The Title was *Foreign Protestants*. Are there no Protestants in the World but of the Church of *England*? Or is the Church of *England* afraid of all the Protestants of *Europe* but such as are of her own Opinion? Are there no Sheep but of one Fold? No doubt the other Protestants of *Europe* are Orthodox in Doctrine, and as proper for *English* Protestants to receive as any; and if you will examine truly, it is not the Church of

of *England*, nor is it the Profeſſors of the Church of *England* Principles that puſh this, but a Party of Men, whoſe Politicks being ever deſtructive to the Civil Liberties of this Nation, were always blended with their Religion, in order to ſupport them; and theſe endeavouring to call themſelves the Church of *England* exclusively of all others, have Reaſon indeed to be afraid of bringing in any other Proteſtants, for it is moſt certain, that of all the ſeveral Kinds of Proteſtants in *Europe*, not one Sort would be *High Church-men, no not one*, unleſs the new Faction of young *Turettin* at *Geneva* be reckon'd upon, whoſe *High-Church* Principles were infus'd into him at *Oxford*, and are daily cultivated, and ſome ſay ſupported from thence.

And where's the Conſiſtency of the great Article we are upon, *of encouraging Strangers to ſettle among us*, with laying this Iron Yoak upon the Neck of their Conſciences, to prompt Men to proſtitute their Principles to their private Intereſt; if it be agreeable to their Principles, and they can with Safety to their Conſciences conform, they will do it without this *Tacit* Compulſion——If it be againſt their Conſciences, why ſhould you put a Force upon them, or lay a Snare before them? *Gentlemen of the Church*, have you not Hypocrites enough among you already?

You have rais'd a great Noiſe about Occaſional Conformity, and I am as much againſt it as any of you; but if Occaſional Conformity be Hypocriſie, is not this encreaſing it—To make Foreigners conform to qualifie themſelves to live among us—— For does it follow, if once they take it, they ſhall always take it—— If then they do not continue in your Communion, you only make them Occaſional Conformiſts for the Time, and then they go back where they were; and if they do go back, pray, what do you get by it? If you can make a Law that they ſhall not go back, or can, *you ſay*, unnaturalize them again—Then you have gain'd your Occaſional Bill you ſo long ſtruggled, and tack'd and attack'd us about, or elſe have naturaliz'd no Body at all by the Act.

I think, theſe Inconſiſtencies were ſo manifeſt, that I cannot but wonder, any Body ſhould offer them to us at this Time of Day——I know, the Bill was loſt once for ſuch Trifles as theſe, when the Stream of Ignorance running high, wiſe Men were content to embrace the general Folly that they might be in the Mode: The Word *Foreigner* was the *Shibboleth* of a Party, who made it popular, that they might the better affront that great Foreigner, that had made them all *Denizens*, I mean, King *William*. With what Fury did our mock Patriots oppoſe this Bill, only as they thought it affronted the King? How were we told of naturalizing the whole *Dutch* Nation? How were we reproach'd with our former Act of making the *Scots* natural born Subjects? *Tho' it is own'd, it was their Loſs and our Gain*——But Party-Spleen over-run the Nation, and threw us all into a State-Lethargy; our Politick Underſtandings fell into the Green-Sickneſs, in which puling Diſtemper we eat Aſhes and Dirt, till our Liberty grew languid and pale; the wholeſome Food of Law made to eſtabliſh us, made us ſick, and abundant Faintings, Swoonings, *and Fits of the Father inſtead of Fits of the Mother*, poſſeſs'd us——

Under this Diſorder of our National Appetite, it is no Wonder, if we grew ſick of our own Advantages, nor was it owing to our own Conduct that we did not *caſt*—— And vomit up Revolution, Conſtitution, Toleration, and all the wholeſome Food we had taken in, by which our former Strength and Health had been eſtabliſh'd.

But you are now rid of your Foreigner; he that ſent him for your Deliverance, took him away for his own; he deliver'd him from your vexing his Righteous Soul with Eternal Clamours, he deliver'd him from the Torment of ſeeing a Nation blind to their own Proſperity, he deliver'd him from the Torture of ungrateful Subjects, hypocritical pretended Friends, and conceal'd but inveterate Enemies; he deliver'd him from the uneaſie Clamour of your Tongues, and the Rage of the Men he ſav'd—— And he left you One, who I might almoſt ſay, Heaven it ſelf could hardly imagine you could object againſt—— One whom, *till you had her*, you ador'd and pretended to wiſh for; *but as ſoon as you had her*, abus'd

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as far as you durſt, in the ſame manner you did her Glorious Predeceſſor——And Nothing but GOD and Victory has preſerv'd her from your *High-Flying* Violence.

And now your Madneſs has open'd the Nations Eyes, now you will receive Foreigners and *Dutch* Men, and allow them your Grace to live among you ——Thank you for nothing, the Meaning is clear, your Eyes are open'd to your own Intereſt, and you will permit that which you know is to your own Advantage; you know, you make their Wealth your own, their Poſterity your own, and by it encreaſe both the Conſumption of your Produce, and the Strength of your Hands, nor need you be afraid of their reſpective Nations, they will in a few Ages to come be all *True-Born Engliſhmen* like you, as you in a few Ages before were all Foreigners like them.

I know but one Scruple rais'd at this Opening the Door to Foreigners, which has any Weight in it—And that is rais'd from the popular Clamour of our Manufacturers, *Viz.* That they eat the Bread out of our Peoples Mouths, under-work, underlive, and ſtarve our Poor.

It may be true, that the Numbers of People, that ſhall come in among us by Virtue of this Act, may be ill ſorted, *that is*, they may over-ſtock us in Particulars, tho' they advantage us in the General; for Example, we want Labourers and Husbandmen, more than we want Weavers and Manufacturers; and among our Foreigners we ſhall get all Weavers and Artificers, no Husbandmen or Labourers.

I think, I have ſtated the Thing right; I ſhall enter into the farther Enquiry of it hereafter, and make no doubt, but it will appear, that a general Supply of People, tho' at preſent it may ſeem to over-fill particular Occupations, yet in the End will be effectually diffuſive thro' the whole, and anſwer the great End of encouraging Strangers to ſettle among us, I mean, ſtrengthning and enriching us.

Of Bankrupts and Inſolvents.

TWO or Three abortive Attempts have given me ſome Work in this Paper, during this Seſſion of Parliament; That of the Priſoners, which, *tho' it paſs*, while under ſuch Reſtrictions and Limitations as we ſee it now, I yet call an abortive Attempt, becauſe it does not come to the main Point, *I mean*, to ſtate and ſettle ſome Bounds and Limits between the Creditors Cruelty and the Debtors Knavery, which might bring the Thing to a Point for the future, and prevent this Clamour of the Oppreſſions and Invaſions on either ſide, from diſturbing the Nation every Parliament. I ſhall enter farther upon it as I go on.

I am no more for encouraging the Frauds and Cheats of Bankrupts, than I am for murthering Men for Debt; it is the Fraud of Bankrupts that makes Bankrupts, the Loſſes of Trade, *and among them the Inſolvency of Tradeſmen is the Chief*, that ruins Tradeſmen. But I am upon an Enquiry, what Tendency have the Severities of this, either to bringing Bankrupts to be more honeſt, or to making the beſt Improvement of the Bankrupts Eſtate.

The laſt Act for appointing the Bankrupt to ſurrender himſelf, and ſurrender his Effects upon Oath upon Pain of Death, was oppos'd with all imaginable Fury at the *Houſe* of *Lords* eſpecially, as Opening a Door to all Manner of Frauds—And now it is done, it is plain, it is the greateſt Security to the Creditor, the greateſt Terror to the knaviſh Bankrupt, and the greateſt Safety to the Effects of the Creditor of any Act that ever yet was made; and tho' the Creditors ſolicited earneſtly to have it be but of a ſhort Continuance, *viz.* three Years, they are diſtracted, if they are not the Men that ſhould get that Time enlarg'd; I dare warrant, no Bankrupt or Inſolvent will ever ſollicite to have it continued.

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